

Stones Never Thrown
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Open your Bibles to John 7:53. We will also read the first eleven verses of chapter 8. The chapter division here could have been better. Now, chapter divisions are not inspired. Do you understand that? Chapter divisions came along to try to help us find places and Scriptures easier. John 7:53 to John 8:11: *And every man went unto his own house. Jesus went unto the mount of Olives And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more.*

Our Father, in Jesus' name, this morning, give us the power of the Holy Spirit to rightly divide the Word of Truth. I pray, Lord, for some heart today that cries out for mercy or for forgiveness. Help them to know that there is forgiveness with Thee that Thou mightest be feared. Speak, we pray today. Help us to hate sin. Help us to love sinners. Help us to love righteousness. Help us to have compassion for the fallen. Minister to our hearts this morning. Blessed Holy Spirit, do what we cannot do as we yield to Thee. In Jesus' name, Amen.

The title of my message this morning is, "Stones Never Thrown." The episode in John 8:1-11 is not found in some of the better manuscripts. Our King James Bible is translated from the original language. The Old Testament was written in Hebrew. The New Testament was written in Greek. The New Testament was first written in Greek, and the manuscripts or the ones still existing were used to compile a Greek New Testament. Now, translations in our English were completed from the Greek New Testament, of course. *Westcott and Hort* Greek text omits this incident of the woman taken in adultery. *Nessels*, the Greek New Testament, includes it but puts it enclosed in brackets. Augusta wrote that it was omitted by prudish fear that it would encourage adultery. Now, some manuscripts and publications leave it out because they say, "Well, it condones adultery." That is the farthest thing from the truth. That is not so. They did not read carefully. Jesus condemns adultery. He names it, as we will see later on. However, the text does not condone sin. It condemns it, but it has compassion for the sinner. The night before this incident transpired, the Sanhedrin had a meeting; and evidently, Nicodemus was in that meeting. They were divided over who was this person Jesus. The multitudes were divided. They were very upset that He was exposing them. Nicodemus spoke up for Him. Do you remember that? The meeting was over. Everybody went to their own homes, and the Lord Jesus Christ went to the Mount of Olives. Now, this was not just an occasional time. We read in Luke 21:37 that this was a pattern of His. He did not sleep in the city of Jerusalem but outside. Luke 21:37-38: *And in the day time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called the mount of Olives. And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, for to hear him.* You talk about poverty. Jesus Christ drank the ultimate in poverty. 2 Corinthians 8:9: *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.* He understands that. He was born in a poor home by choice, lived in poverty, and went to the cross to bear all our sins. Look at our text

in John 8:1-2. Let us read about our Lord's compassion: *Jesus went unto the mount of Olives. And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them.* There is a need for teaching. Sin brings ignorance. When Adam and Eve sinned, a darkness came over their minds. There came acknowledgment of sin, but sin brings ignorance. Sin blinds. Sin maims. Sin lames. Sin curses. Sin struggles and strangles. Sin does that. There is not one good thing that you can say about sin. When a person sins, something in them dies. James 1:15: *Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.* Now, the multiplicity of increasing sin in our country is because of the fact that we have closed the Book. The Word of God tells us right from wrong. We have closed the Book and decided that everybody be a law unto themselves and that everybody decides what is right for themselves. But, you cannot tell what is right for yourself. That is the reason this Book is given. There are people who think it is right to murder. There are people who think it is right to steal. There are people who think just about anything is right. But wait a minute, the Bible gives us clear-cut, drawn-out lines about right and wrong. Jesus taught because the people were ignorant. America is an ignorant nation and has rejected knowledge. Hosea 4:6: *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee . . .* May the public school system be returned and open to the Word of God. May they give long chapel services where a preacher can preach the Word of God and have a revival in the school system and anywhere else. Oh, how we need instruction from the Word of God. Religious leaders of that day were mainly blind leaders of the blind. They had added to the Word of God their traditions, and in adding those things, they became very burdensome. Jesus and His teachings came to correct the false teaching concerning what God was like. In Matthew 5:20, the Lord Jesus said: *That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.* All they had was an external righteousness, an appearance of righteousness. Then, He begins to speak. He is not against Moses, and He started this way. Matthew 5:21: *Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill . . .* Then He says in Matthew 5:27: *Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: Verse 38: Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:* What was he doing? He was speaking with authority and clearing all the tradition away from the pure unadulterated Word of God so that people could hear the voice of God. What a compelling he had to teach the Word of God. When He finished teaching the Scripture, they said He spake with authority and not as the scribes and Pharisees. Now, when I preach, I preach with authority. Why? I am preaching the Word of God. The Word of God is not in a preacher. The Word of God is in the matter of the Word of God. I have tried to stay in the Word of God. When I stay in the Word of God, the issue is not between you and me; the issue is between you and the Word of God. You have to take it up with the Lord Who gave the Word. It is a matter of authority. Matthew 23:3-4 talks about what they did: *All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.* They were teaching wrongly about the Word of God. God never intended that Christianity be a burden. It is a lift. Christianity should never be a bondage; it is liberation, not a bondage. He came to set them straight. He entrusted those who opposed Him. The Scripture says in 2 Timothy 2:25: *In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;* Oh, the compassion that teaches the Word of God. In John 8:3 and 5, we have hypocrisy's intrusion. On Sunday, Christmas day, we had an intrusion. I think most of you remember that. It came out of nowhere, and all of a sudden in the midst of our service, there was bedlam. That intrusion kind of reminds me of this intrusion. He is teaching the Word of God. All of a sudden, there was a noise. A group of men came in with a woman. Her hair was disheveled, and she was probably half clothed and barefooted. She probably had a defiant attitude, and they were dragging her. She may have been shrieking and hollering — I do not know — but they brought this woman

right in the midst of where the Lord Jesus was as He taught the multitude. They brought her in shame and humiliation. Who was it that did this? Well, it was religious leaders, the Scribes and the Pharisees. Now, when you first read it, you get misled. You think this is a group of people that are really earnest about serving God. That was only appearance. They brought this woman in. Their conduct was not an abhorrence of sin. "Hey, a terrible sin was committed in our midst. We abhor sin, and we must deal with it." That was not the reason they brought the lady. Their conduct was not due to extreme respect for the law of Moses. You may think, "My, these folks really revere Moses and the Word of God – such a declaration and such a stand." No, they did not come because they loved Moses and the law of God. They did not come because of the fact that they had an abhorrence of sin. They did not come because they had a desire for public morality. "We want to change our community." That was not what motivated them. It was not to discover truth from the Lord Jesus. In the previous chapter, they called Him a deceiver. Now, they come with seemingly meek spirits to learn from the Master. "Master, Rabbi, you are the teacher. We have a difficult decision to make. This woman was caught in adultery, and Moses said stone her. Master, what sayest thou?" Oh, that sounds so meek and so humble and so submissive, but that was not the nature of the case at all. Their motive, the next verse says, was that they might accuse him. They came in order to trump up charges, to seemingly get the Lord Jesus Christ in the horns of a dilemma where He could not answer. But, Jesus Christ knew their motives and why they were there. Jesus Christ had exposed their heartlessness when he healed a man on the Sabbath Day. They got very angry. John 7:7: *The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.* Their motive was to accuse Him. They never let up until they crucified Him on Calvary's cross. He had foiled their attempt in chapter 7. They sent soldiers out to take Him. The soldiers came back, and the Scribes and Pharisees said, "Why have you not taken him?" They said, "Never a man spake like this man." The soldiers were spellbound as He spoke with authority and sincerity and compassion. The Scribes and Pharisees were foiled in their attempt to accuse Him. They had another opportunity. I am of the opinion that this was a trumped-up case. I am of the opinion that this was a setup. Where was the man? It takes two to commit adultery. Here was the woman. Where in the world was the man? Nothing is said about the man. Jesus knew their character. Their deeds were evil. He wept over them. One of the greatest scathings in the Word of God is in Matthew 23. I think every Christian ought to read it periodically. It is a message that concludes with His weeping over the city: *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem . . .* It was not done in anger. It was done in desire that light might shine upon them that they might face themselves and repent. It was done in love, but it was a holy love. That chapter examines our motives. That chapter examines all about us. He turned the searchlight on every part of their being in order to bring them to repentance. He broke down with weeping when he finished that. He knew their character. He wept over them. They hated Him. He broke their laws in being merciful to mankind. They were foiled.

Notice the woman's transgression in John 8. Did she commit this act? Yes, sir. Jesus said, . . . *go, and sin no more.* Did she commit adultery? Evidently, she did. Our Lord said, . . . *go, and sin no more.* Jesus called it sin. Was she guilty? Yes, she was guilty. Let us look at this sin of adultery a little bit before we come back to the woman. In Exodus 20:14, one of the ten commandments is very explicit: *Thou shalt not commit adultery.* In Pope County, a man stood to make a charge against his mate and said she had committed adultery. The judge said, "I do not want to hear that word in my court anymore." That is still one of the ten commandments of God, the protection of family. *Thou shalt not commit adultery.* Israel's three greatest crimes were idolatry, murder, and adultery. All were punishable by death. Leviticus 20:10: *And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.* That was what Moses said – death by stoning. Now there is a thrill about adultery. Proverbs tells us about that. In Proverbs 9:16-18, this woman calls and says: *Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: and as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant. But he knoweth not*

that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell. Adultery has a thrill of sin. It has it. People tell about it. The Bible warns about it. Proverbs writes about it again and again. There is a thrill about this matter of sin. In Matthew 5, Jesus tells us the only grounds for divorce. Let me read about it. In Matthew 5:32, our Lord said: *But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.* Jesus also said that adultery was more than an act: *But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.* Now that is what the Lord Jesus said about adultery.

Go back to John 8. The plot was that we had Him on the horns of a dilemma. . . . *but what sayest thou?* If he said, "Stone her," then comes the collision with the Roman government. The Jews no longer had the power of capital punishment. Only Rome could do that. That would put him under the charge of sedition, trying to usurp the government's prerogative. Moreover, if He said, "Stone her," then Rome would be breathing down His neck. If he said, "Release her," then he was in collision with Moses who said, "Stone her." In their heart they were laughing and saying, "Boy, we have got Him. He cannot get out of this." Others have tried to get Him in that position but never got away with it. Notice the words of our Lord Jesus Christ and His words of wisdom in His answer. He told them that their question was unworthy of being answered. He ignored them. He wrote on the ground. A lot of people try to say what He wrote. Some say He wrote the names of the girls that these guys had been hob knobbing around with. Some say He wrote their names in the sand, and boy, they skedaddled. Now, He could have done that, but the Scripture says – if you read carefully – *This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.* He ignored them. By their manner of approach, he knew they were not looking for truth. He knew what they were practicing. He knew they had no desire for truth. He knew they were not concerned about morality. He knew all about them. There are some folks that you just do not answer. Proverbs 26:4: *Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him.* The next verse says: *Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.* It takes discernment to know when to answer a fool and when to be quiet. It is unworthy of your answer. Now, He clearly stated in Luke 12, that this is not the day of judgment, and He did not come to be a judge today. He came to be a Savior. When He came, He never usurped the right of the government that was in order. Man came to Him. In my thoughts, as I go back in my ministry, it could have been down at the funeral home. Luke 12:13-14: *And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.* ("Hey! Wait a minute. Make him share with me.") *And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?* He did not come to do that. He is coming again as King of kings and Lord of lords. Government will flow from Him in every facet, but He did not come to do that. Luke 19:10: *For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.* John 3:17: *For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.* They approached the Lord Jesus, and He said, "You have approached the wrong person. I will have nothing to do with it!" Well, they kept on quoting Him, kept on gouging Him, thinking that they had Him in their corner and that He could not answer them. They were determined to have an answer. It would have been better for them if they would have just quietly went on their way.

Now, look at our Lord's answer. He returned them to Moses. In John 8, Jesus turned on them, and these are verses that are quoted and quoted. You must understand what these verses are saying. You had better listen carefully. John 8:6-7: *This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.* Now, I have written articles in the local newspaper dealing with sin, and somebody will write, "He that is without sin, let him cast the first stone." No. That makes it so nobody will cast any stones anywhere. Our Lord is not talking about he that is without the matter of sin generally; He is talking about the specifics. If that thing

holds, then nobody could ever sit in a court of justice. No father could ever discipline his children. Nobody could ever say anything to anybody about anything because of the fact that all of us are sinners. We would have to go to Heaven on somebody else's credit. We are sinners saved by grace. We do not have what it takes, and Jesus had to die to save us. When He saves us, He charges His righteousness to us, and none of us have anything to strut around about. No! We are sinners saved by the grace of God! But wait. Our Lord is lacing the Mosaic law upon their foot and dealing with specifics. Now, the specifics in Deuteronomy 17:6-7: *At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death. The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So thou shalt put the evil away from among you.* They stoned the deacon, Stephen, and put him to death. Now, the witnesses have to throw the first stone. He turned to them and said, "Are you interested in Moses? Then, I ask you to do what Moses gave instruction about. The person that is the witness must be the first to stone, but make sure that you are not guilty of that which you are trying to put her to death about." In Romans 2, Paul is dealing with a Jew and how he turned away from God. He rested in the law and did not care; it did not have any effect on his life. Romans 2:21-22: *Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery?* "So, you ought to carry out Moses' law. If you have not committed adultery, then you get the stones and cast the stones." It really did something to these folks. It got a hold of their hearts and lives.