

Drop the Stones

September 7, 2018



On my desk in the Chaplain's study, there are 3 beautiful stones with the scripture reference from the New Testament book of John, chapter 8, verse 7. There were other stones, but I have given them away to those in need.

It must have been extremely difficult for certain religious leaders the day they rushed into a meeting Jesus was having and interrupting His teaching. It was extremely rude, but these religious leaders, all puffed up and self-righteous were on a mission.

Not only were these leaders wanting to pick a fight with Jesus on that day, like they had done many days before, but they tried to dishonor Him by stopping Him right in the middle of teaching those who were hungry to hear the truth.

So, there they stood, encircling a woman whom they accused of being caught in the act of adultery. Their eyes were ablaze with self-righteous anger. But, Jesus simply stood, looked them in the eyes, then stooped down, and began to write something in the dirt with His finger.

They watched Jesus, stones in their hands ready to hurl at this woman and kill her for her sin. As they looked to the ground where Jesus was writing, Jesus stood once again, looked them in their eyes, and said, *"He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first."*

What did Jesus write in the dirt? The finger of God was writing something, but what did it say? It is impossible to say what was written as the Bible does not record the answer. It does remind me of the feast of Belshazzar recorded in Daniel 5 where God wrote on the wall with His own finger a foreboding message to a guilty king.

The words that were written and the words that Jesus spoke made those who stood there suddenly look inward to their own heart's condition. From the oldest to the youngest, one by one they dropped their stones and walked away as fast as they could from the presence of Jesus, the Son of God.

The stones on my desk are a reminder to look inward at my own condition before I try to judge others and pass a convicting glance their way. Even though I try, the thing that I find too often is the feel of a stone in the palm of my hand that I don't even remember picking up.

Worse yet is the sudden conviction of a portion of my heart that God reveals that still harbors sin of my own, a part that must be given to God for forgiveness. Only then can I love my neighbor as myself as Jesus has commanded.

In Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible, referencing John 8, he writes, *"When we cannot make our point by steering a direct course, it is good to fetch a compass."* That compass should be the Word of God. Henry goes on to say, *"But he does not write men's sin in the sand; no, they are written as with a pen of iron and the point of a diamond, never to be forgotten till they are forgiven."*

As we walk through this life today, I pray we become aware of the stones we hold in our own hands, ready to accuse, ready to throw. And then, I pray we remember from where we have come, and that Jesus has forgiven us of our sins, and we should show His love to those who are struggling.