

# STOP THROWING ROCKS!

By Pastor Greg Hooker

*"...He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her" (John 8:7).*

When I was a young teenager, my younger brother, Dwayne, did something to make me extremely upset. To this day, however, I can't remember what it was that made me so irate, but whatever it was, I had unquenchable fury in my eyes and vengeance surging through my veins. So much so, that I picked up the nearest rock about the size of a large marble, took aim, acquired my target, reared back, and with precision and velocity that would have made any major league baseball pitcher envious, I 'let-her-fly'.

Reaching near the speed of sound, that projectile connected with my brother's head opening up a gash, followed by a stream of blood trickling down the right side of his cheek! Now you would have thought a victory dance was in order, but the fact is; the moment I saw that crimson-river on the side of his face, my thoughts immediately did a one-hundred and eighty degree about face. With little regard to the condition of my youngest brother who was writhing in agony and pain, all I could think of was, 'the wrath of mama to come'!

You see, as fate would have it, about ten feet to the left of the exact spot I launched my missile from, was an old forsythia bush, that was, without doubt, created by God for the sole purpose of transforming the backsides of rebellious boys and girls into bright-red road maps that usually took several days for nature to re-pave!

Although that sad, but true story didn't have a happy conclusion for me; forty years later, I am able, once more, to set in comfort! Sorry, Dwayne, I don't remember why you made me so mad that day, but you probable deserved what you got (just kidding, I love you, brother)! It sure came at a high price on my part (I still detest that forsythia bush)!

That brings us to another true 'stoning story' from the pages of the Bible. While teaching in the temple, Jesus was approached by a group of scribes and Pharisees. They brought a woman who had been caught red-handed in the act of adultery. With the intentions of trapping and tempting Jesus, they posed the question, "*Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou*" (John 8:5)?

'We've got you now, Jesus', they thought to themselves, but the Lord calmly stooped and began writing in the dust of the ground. Not giving up, the scribes and Pharisees continued to tempt and press the Savior for an answer. Finally, Jesus said, "*...He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her*" (John 8:7). Following, Jesus stooped again and began to write, and one by one the scribes and Pharisees departed having said nothing more."

What, exactly, Jesus inscribed on the ground has been deliberated since He wrote it. But the Lord may have left us a clue when He made the statement, *"...He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her"*.

You see, Jesus knew the hidden secrets of the hearts of these men who blazingly delivered the woman caught in the act of adultery. It is quite possible that Jesus wrote the sins of each man in the dirt, to which they became ashamed and convicted. Perhaps the scribes and Pharisees were guilty of the same sin of adultery, unknown to those around them, but privy to Jesus.

Have you ever found yourself in a similar situation; guilty of pointing a Pharisaical finger at the sins of others, when in all actuality, guilty of the same? I must confess; I have done so on more occasions than I care to numerate. It's so easy to pick up that stone of condemnation and hurl it at others without first surveying one's own life. Quite often we develop sanctimonious attitudes, a 'holier-than-thou' brashness when we look at the faults and failures of others. 'Did you hear what so and so did?!

Don't get me wrong, the moral character of God never fluctuates; sin will always be sin and wrong will always be wrong, but as the Lord said in Matthew 7:5, *"You hypocrite, first cast out the beam [faults] out of your own eye; and then shall you see clearly to cast out the speck out of your brother's eye."*

In conclusion: If we heeded the Lord's admonition to deal with our own sins, I'm certain we would have a very small rock pile to hurl at those around us! *"...He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her"*.

Dear Lord, I confess to you my swiftness to pick up stones of condemnation, while at the same time over-looking my own faults. What an embarrassment it is for me to point fingers at the errors of others, rather than deal with those I can do something about, mine. Heavenly Father, I ask you to bring to my attention those evils darkening my own life before I pick up a stone to cast at my neighbor.

In Jesus name, your son, Pastor Greg .