

Day 258 – Thursday, December 3, 2020

This is a five-part series. The last part will be sent Friday.

4 Teachings of Jesus That His Followers (Almost) Never Take Seriously

3. Condemnation isn't Jesus' style.

"I have not come to condemn the world, but to save it." John 3:17 ESV

"Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more." - John 8:11 ESV

Many modern-day Evangelical preachers spend a lot of time talking about the kinds of people that God is opposed to and who he condemns. They spend time talking about how to transition from a position of condemnation before God to a position of Grace through believing the right things about Jesus. They often talk about those who disagree or live contrary to their understanding of what is "righteous" as those who are under condemnation from God. But what's funny is that as one examines the teachings and life of Jesus, we find him not only befriending, loving, and affirming some of his societies most despised and vile people, but chastising the religious leaders who condemned them for their sin. Whether it is Jesus' conversation with Rabbi Nicodemus in John 3 where Christ explains that it is his mission to redeem the world and not to condemn it or the instance where a woman is caught in the act of adultery and is taken outside to be stoned by the religious officials (as the law required) and Jesus steps in to stop the condemnation and proclaim freedom and forgiveness to the broken woman, it is clear that Jesus is not in the condemning business. Instead, it seems Christ is in the business of restoring humanity to the most broken and wicked of people. It seems that his passion is to see the weak, sick, and broken become strong, healthy, and whole in his Kingdom. It seems that he spends very little time (almost none) telling sinners why they're wrong or speaking words of condemnation over them, but rather practically loving and extending grace to the most screwed up of individuals. Maybe we Evangelicals, who are known for our condemnation of entire people groups with whom we disagree, could learn something from Jesus on this point.

"Life should NOT be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in an attractive and well-preserved body, but rather to skid in sideways, chocolate in one hand, champagne in the other, body thoroughly used up, totally worn out and screaming "WOO HOO what a ride!" (Hunter S. Thompson)

Sincerely,
Fr. Jim Kaptein