

"Finding Your War"

2 Samuel 11-12

Pastor Peter Hiett

November 19 and 20, 2011

Prologue

Last week we finished the Gospel of John and talked about this cartoon

"Have you found Jesus?" and Jesus is hiding behind the curtain. (If He really is "Word of God", He's everywhere and somehow behind every curtain.)

So, this morning I'd like to start a little min-series called "*Jesus Everywhere*." Over the next few months, we'll look for Jesus in all sorts of strange places...including a manger.

This has been a crazy week for me so I decided to start with a text I preached on 6 years ago and still find utterly fascinating. It's 2 Samuel 11 and 12:

Jesus in the midst of adultery, murder, warfare;
Jesus in the stronghold of the King of Shame.

Opening Prayer

Let's pray. And so, Lord Jesus, would you be here in our midst and would you cause us to preach and believe your Gospel. In your name we pray, Lord Jesus. Amen.

Sermon

11 In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David send Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel. And they ravaged the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.

2 Samuel 11:1 (ESV)

David the King of Israel and legendary warrior stayed home on the couch.

On a date in high school with my girlfriend, Susan Coleman, driving my parents' orange VW bus; I pulled up behind a Jeep turning left off of Broadway onto Littleton Boulevard. As I did, a guy in the back seat of the Jeep spoke to me in Sign Language. Interestingly enough, it happened to be the only Sign Language I knew. He spoke to me in Sign Language and immediately a vision flashed through my brain.

Clint Eastwood. Don't know about kids today but when I was in high school, no one was as Bad A...ttitude as Clint Eastwood.

"Do you feel lucky, Punk?"

So, this Punk spoke to me in Sign Language and

I spoke back...same sign

He shamed me

I shamed him.

Well, after we turned the Jeep started to follow us. At a stop sign on Caley, 3 guys jumped out of the Jeep and jumped on the bus screaming and yelling.

As I drove off, they jumped off and continued to follow. I prayed frantically (in the silence of my own heart so Susan wouldn't hear)...

"Jesus please let my parents be home."

Jesus didn't answer my prayer with a yes. I pulled up in the driveway; the Jeep screeched up behind me. Three guys jumped out screaming, *"Hey man, you flipped us off."* One guy had a bat, another guy had numb chucks and the third guy had a bag of lead shot.

I said *"You flipped me off first."*

They said, *"Did not."*

I said, *"Did too."*

"Did not."

As negotiations broke down, one screamed, *"You wanna fight man."*

(Trying to act as if I normally would.) I said, *"Well, not really."*

"See, I'm on a date with my girlfriend and all."

"And there's 3 of you and only one of me."

The one that flipped me off yelled, *"We'll take turns."* (A very civilized gesture.)

But, I declined. I negotiated for about 30 minutes, out on the lawn. Finally they left, with some comments regarding my masculinity.

And I felt such incredible shame. I felt shame.

And I wanted to fight...shame someone else...to hide my shame.

I wanted to fight...I just didn't want to lose...only win.

Well as I reflected on that incident; how they flipped me off; how they had their weapons handy; how they tried to make me feel bad...

It occurred to me *"Hey I think those guys were just looking for a fight."*

Like warriors looking for a war...

Why is it that so many guys (especially guys) are just looking for a war? We go to war for "bad reasons," but is that partly because we've lost "the good reason." I mean, is it possible that we were made to be warriors...

we've just lost sight of the war?

You know there are an awful lot of admirable qualities in a soldier

- Courage
- Perseverance
- Strength
- Faithfulness
- Self-sacrifice

So many admirable qualities in a warrior unless of course he's in the wrong war.

Well why are so many guys, like just looking for a fight, a war? It's not just high school; it gets worse later, more sophisticated. Instead of numb chucks, our weapons are degrees, awards, finances, corporate takeovers, and "trophy wives."

Perhaps even church size;
Religion and good deeds.

With them we go to war,
but not war against shame.

We go to war
to hide our own shame.

Well in 2 Samuel 11, all of Israel and even the Ark of the Covenant is at war...but not David...he stays home.

Israel was besieging Rabbah of the Ammonites. Today Rabbah is known Amman Jordan. At that time, the Ammonites worshiped Molech and believed their king to be the representation of Molech. The worship of Molech appears to have included cultic child prostitution and it certainly included the sacrifice of children through fire. Most scholars think Molech means "King of Shame." Israel was battling the King of Shame (a demonic principality that consumed human life).

Jeremiah prophesized that one day Molech would be sent into exile but that God would restore the fortunes of the Ammonites. You see Israel really wasn't battling the Ammonites (flesh and blood). They were at war with Molech (the principality and power). The problem was they couldn't extract Molech from the Ammonites; well according to Jesus, His followers can. Jesus gave us authority to cast out demons. It's absolutely amazing to witness a real exorcism but I don't think we're supposed to go around casting demons out of everything; not that way at least. They didn't in Scripture and yet Paul says *"They are the ones we battle."*

Paul writes in Ephesians 6:12,

¹² We wrestle not (battle not) against flesh and blood but principalities and powers, the world rulers of this present darkness, the spiritual host of wickedness in heavenly places.

Ephesians 6:12

We battle Satan, the Accuser. He sounds a lot like Molech, King of Shame. So how do you fight the King of Shame?....

Can you conquer him with swords, shield, bows and arrows?

We've got this "war on terror."

How do you fight terror?

Can you conquer terror with guns, tanks and bombs?

We can conquer countries with those things....
but terror?

If we fight terror with terror or shame with shame...

How do we hope to conquer the King of Shame?

Well perhaps you were made to be a warrior;

But – have you found your war?

In one of his books, C.S. Lewis describes the joy one of his characters feels when he finds himself in a battle with the embodiment of Satan.

The Joy came at last, from finding out at last what hatred was made for. As a boy with an axe rejoices in finding a tree, so he rejoiced in the perfect congruity between his emotion and its object. Perfect congruity between an emotion and its object.

Perelandra by C. S. Lewis

I think we're all angry, but don't know who to be angry with; angry because this world is broken and something within us demands justice. In recent years some have been angry at me and a suggestion I've made, and that the Bible makes:

Perhaps the Lamb of God really "takes away the sin of the world."

And perhaps God really has Mercy on all (as Paul said in Romans).

I think they get mad 'cause they think "forgiving all" is laying down the sword and giving up the fight. But I suspect they have not yet encountered the one that we're fighting nor picked up the Sword with which we slay him.

Well Scripture says "*Hate what is Evil.*" Evil is all absence and no substance and I think Satan is Evil. "*He was a murderer from the beginning,*" said Jesus and "*There is no Truth in him.*"

So how do you battle Satan?

And the King of Shame? - With shame??

How do you fight Evil? – With evil??

Do you put it in an eternal container and preserve it – endlessly??

George Mac Donald wrote: "*Only good where evil was, is evil dead.*"

So how do you fight the King of Shame?

In 2 Samuel 11, David was not fighting the King of Shame.



David was a warrior who had lost his war and found his couch. I have this drawing hanging on the wall in my office. Chachi Hernandez heard me preach on this 6 years ago and drew this. I titled that sermon "Warriors on Their Couches" 2 Samuel 11:1 – David is on his couch.

²It happened, late one afternoon, when David arose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful. ³And David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, "Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" [David is a warrior and now he's found something to conquer.]

⁴So David sent messengers and took her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. (Now she had been purifying herself from her uncleanness.) Then she returned to her house. And the woman conceived, and she sent and told David, "I am pregnant."

2 Samuel 11:2-5 (ESV)

And what did David feel? ... Shame. So what did David do?

He goes to war, not with shame, but to cover his shame (protect his shame).

I suspect you know the story:

David sends for Uriah and arranges for Uriah to sleep with Bathsheba (so the baby will appear to be Uriah's). But Uriah refuses to sleep with his wife in his home because his fellow Israelites and the Ark of the Covenant sleep in tents, at war in the field.

Uriah is a Great Warrior. So what does David feel?

David feels more shame and tries to hide the shame. Not face the shame; hide the shame.

He arranges for Uriah to be killed in battle against the Ammonites. He sacrifices Uriah to the King of Shame; then takes Bathsheba as his own. 2 Samuel, verse 27:

²⁷...But the thing that David had done displeased (literally: "is evil in the eyes of") the Lord.

2 Samuel 11:27 (ESV)

It would appear that Molech (who consumes children in adultery and death) won.

God's child, Uriah, is murdered.

God's daughter, Bathsheba, is raped.

And God's son, David, is imprisoned in shame.

It would appear that Molech, King of Shame, won; as he won with the Ammonites.

As he appears to win now with adultery, divorce, murder, and rape.

As he appears to win all over the world with people enslaved and driven by ego and shame.

John writes "*The whole world lies in the Power of the Evil One.*"

It appears that Molech (who is Satan or a demon of Satan)...

It appears that Molech wins and it appears that Molech won.

Molech won in Israel because

David was not fighting God's war;

David was fighting his own war.

And in fighting his own war, he ended up fight Molech's war...

If we're not battling for our Lord; we end up battling for Molech (King of Shame).

Jesus said, "*He who is not with me is against me.*" And "*He who does not gather, scatters.*"

In the words of Bob Dylan, "You're gonna have to serve somebody. Now it might be the Devil or it might be the Lord, but you're gonna have to serve somebody."

"Why are you married?" or
"Why are you single?"
"Why do you go to work?"
"Why do you go to school?"
"Why do you make money?"
"Why do you breathe?"
"Why do you do good deeds?"

Who are you fighting for?
Is it you and your kingdom?
To win your dignity and cover your shame?
You?
If so...you're really fighting for Molech.

Who are you fighting for? Do you know?

You've taken World History. You know warriors on couches; warriors without a war are a frightening proposition...for they will be conscripted by someone or something.

David was conscripted to conquer Bathsheba; consume Uriah; and battle His maker for the Throne. David was conscripted by Molech for he was already enslaved to Molech.

David was in "Hell." (Psalm 86:13, King James Version, that's what he calls it).

How do you battle the King of Shame, while imprisoned in shame???

David was imprisoned in the stronghold of the King of Shame.

But the King of Glory rises from His Throne;
straps on His sword;
and goes to war for David.

2 Samuel, chapter 12, verses 1-4:

12 And the Lord sent Nathan to David. He came to him and said to him, "There were two men in a certain city, the one rich and the other poor. ²The rich man had very many flocks and herds, ³but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. And he brought it up, and it grew up with him and with his children. It used to eat of his morsel and drink from his cup and lie in his arms, and it was like a daughter to him. ⁴Now there came a traveler to the rich man, and he was unwilling to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the guest who had come to him, but he took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him.

2 Samuel 12:1-4 (ESV)

The poor man cherishes the lamb.

The rich man consumes the lamb.

It's like

Uriah is the poor man;
David is the rich man;
And Bathsheba is the lamb.

Yet someone else is also the Lamb. We'll discover that David sinned against this Lamb and this Lamb alone. As if this lamb was slaughtered, when David slaughtered Uriah, and this lamb was consumed when David consumed Bathsheba.

So Nathan tells the story. David gets furious and pronounces the death sentence. His own death sentence...death for the man who had no mercy. Then Nathan says *"You are the man."* And he prophesizes saying *"Thus says the Lord. Why have you despised the Word of the Lord?"* Who is the Word of the Lord? John told us...He is the Light...and He is the Lamb and in the Revelation we see it: He is the Lord of Hosts, the great and dreadful Warrior.

And so He says through Nathan to David

¹⁰"Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife." ¹¹Thus says the Lord, "Behold, I will raise up evil against you out of your own house. And I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. ¹²For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel and before the sun."

2 Samuel 12:10-12 (ESV)

There may be nothing more public than what you do in private. *"What you have whispered in secret shall be proclaimed from the roof tops,"* said Jesus. The Lord tells David that what he did in secret will happen to him, for all to see, in the sight of the sun (on the roof top).

It's almost as if God is saying *"David, my son, as you wounded me; so now your son will wound you."*

You may remember the story. One of David's sons, Amnon, rapes one of David's daughters, Tamar. Another of David's sons, Absalom, then murders Amnon to cover the shame. Then Absalom despises his father and overthrows David's Rule; just as David despised God and overthrew His Rule. (It's like David and his family is delivered up to Molech.)

And then to demonstrate his victory, Absalom (David's son) will have sex with 10 of David's wives on the roof, in the sun, before all Israel (the very roof from which David lusted over Bathsheba).

It's like David is sentenced to feel for Amnon, Tamar, Absalom, and his 10 brides just a little of what God feels for Uriah, Bathsheba, David and Israel, God's Bride. When Absalom is finally killed, David cries *"Oh Absalom, if only I had died instead of you."*

Well, verse 13:

¹³David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord." And Nathan said to David, "The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die."

2 Samuel 12:13 (ESV)

"The Lord has put away your sin." That is *"It is forgiven."* Did you get that? Forgiven and yet David will feel all of that pain.

That means the pain isn't punishment, retribution or even anger...
It's discipline.

To know God's Mercy, perhaps you have to see your sin and taste its pain? You have to face the shame. To know forgiveness, perhaps you have to know what you're forgiven of. Nathan says *"The Lord has put away your sin."* Where has He put it?

¹⁴Nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly scorned the Lord, the child who is born to you shall die."

2 Samuel 12:14 (ESV)

"The child born to you." The son of David shall die. The sin has been placed on the Son of David.
You want justice? Where's your sin?
It's on the Son of David – the Lamb of God.

Isaiah 53, *"Surely He has born our grief and carried our sorrows...upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace. The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all...Like a lamb (seh – it can mean sheep or goat)...like a lamb lead to the slaughter.*

The Son of David is your scapegoat. Whenever we preach the depths of God's Grace, people will inevitably say *"If all ends up forgiven, why not sin?" "Why not sin, that Grace may abound?"* Why not?

All our sin is loaded on Jesus.

That's why not.

It's like every time you choose to sin, you kill the Christ Child.

Every time you sin, you pound the nails.

Why not sin? Do you love Him? Do you love the Son of David?

David learned to love the Son of David and then watched as He died.

To know god's Mercy...

Perhaps we need to taste how much it cost Him

We need to watch the Son of David die.

Verse 15

¹⁵Then Nathan went to his house. And the Lord afflicted the child that Uriah's wife bore to David, and he became sick. ¹⁶David therefore sought God on behalf of the child. And David fasted and went in and lay all night on the ground. ¹⁷And the elders of his house stood beside him, to raise him from the ground, but he would not, nor did he eat food with them. ¹⁸On the seventh day the child died.

2 Samuel 12:15-18a (ESV)

On the seventh day (that's the end of day 6 by our reckoning).

When God finished Creation...

When Jesus cried, *"It is finished."*

Verse 20

*²⁰Then David arose from the earth [When the Son of David died.] [One day you will rise from the earth.]
and washed and anointed himself and changed his clothes. And he went into the house of the Lord and worshiped.* 2 Samuel 12:20 (ESV)

Worshiped. Remember how God would have Israel place the choir in front of the Army when Israel would go to war? The Son of David died – David rose – and then worshiped. Wouldn't you like to know what he said? You do! It's Psalms 51.

¹To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet went to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba. Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

*⁴Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.
[Did you catch that? David's sin against the Lamb displays the Justice of God and the Glory of His Judgment (Jesus is God's Judgment).]*

⁶Behold you delight in truth in the inward being... [Jesus is the Truth]

¹⁰Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

*¹³Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.
[People trapped in shame will return.]*

¹⁵O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

¹⁷The sacrifices of god are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Psalms 51:1, 4, 6, 10, 13, 15, 17 (ESV)

Do you realize that David wrote over ½ the Psalms? That's the Word of God and Word of David's testimony.

In the Revelation 12:11, we conquer the Accuser *"by the Blood of the Lamb and Word of our testimony."*

The Word of God

Born of David

Born out of his sin, sorrow and shame.

Beautiful things can be born out of sin, sorrow, and shame.

The child dies. David worships. His servants wonder at his behavior. So he says

²²He said, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept, for I said, 'Who knows whether the Lord will be gracious to me, that the child may live?' But now he is dead.

Why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me.

2 Samuel 12:22-23 (ESV)

Where is the son of David? He has descended into the Sheol. David will join him, but will not stay dead. Paul wrote this about the Son of David, *“If we are joined with him in a death like His; we shall surely be joined with him in a resurrection like His.”*

The son of David dies. But maybe the Lord is still gracious to David (more than David even begins to know).

²⁴Then David comforted his wife,

[He didn't "take her" as before. He had mercy for her. He loved the Lamb.]

Bathsheba, and went in to her and lay with her, and she bore a son, and he called his name Solomon.

[Solomon means "peaceful" like Prince of Peace.]

And the Lord loved him ²⁵and sent a message by Nathan the prophet. So he called his name Jedidiah,

[Jedidiah means "beloved of the Lord."]

because of the Lord.

2 Samuel 12:24-25 (ESV)

So a son of David died because of David's sin. And a Son of David rose out of David's sin... And this risen Son of David is like the Fruit of David's confession. Jesus said *“Bear the fruit that befits repentance.”* And did you realize that Bathsheba is Jesus' Great Great Grandmother? So if it weren't for David's sin, how would we know Jesus?

The Prince of Peace (Solomon) is born right out of David's sin, sorrow, and shame. He's born right out from under the dominion of Molech. It's like he's born in some stinkin' manger in a barn somewhere.

And the Government will be on His shoulders – Prince of Peace.

So if you feel like a failure; you're wracked with guilt; and the baby has died – surrender your shame and Good News:

The Prince of Peace is born in your manger.

Well Solomon ascends to the throne and builds the Temple. He accomplishes the greatest deeds in Israelite history...The son of David.

But remember there were 2 "sons of David" in this story.

1. One that bore David's sin and descended into Sheol, like the scapegoat on the Day of Atonement...the sin offering on every Holy Day.
2. And the other that rose from David's ashes and built the House of God, like a pleasing offering...the good deed...the spotless Lamb.

Two sons of David that are one Son of David.

His name is Jesus (of the house and lineage of David).

He is Lord of Hosts.

He is the strong arm of the Lord.

The Dread Warrior.

And that's how He delivers David from the stronghold of Shame:

...a baby born in David's manger

...his place of Shame.

Well in the next paragraph of 2 Samuel, David defeats the Ammonites. It's a sign I would suppose...for if David is free; Israel is not yet free. In just 100 years, evil King Ahab and Jezebel will sacrifice infants to Molech in the valley of Gehenna, just outside the walls of Jerusalem.

David defeated the Ammonites with his sword of steel. But Molech (King of Shame) was not yet defeated. Satan is not defeated (in space and time) – not defeated.

Until Jesus, the Son of David, Lord of Hosts, arm of the Lord, Dread Warrior...

Until Jesus hangs on the tree at the edge at the 7th day...

Where He bears our sin to destruction

In the Eternal Fire of our Father's Love.

Where He gives His Life to us

His spirit born in the manger that is us.

Now He is the Word of God in us;

the two-edged sword that we speak;

the Gospel that slays the King of Shame;

the Word of Grace.

"Jesus Christ and Him crucified" is our

1. Judgment
2. Discipline
3. Redemption
4. And Sanctification

And it's all Mercy.

How do you battle the King of Shame? ... with the Word of Mercy.

1. It was Mercy that sent Nathan to David
and judged David as unmerciful.
2. It was Mercy that disciplined David
and made him feel the pain of his sin
so he could then feel Mercy.
3. It was Mercy that offered the Son of David to die
The Son of David is also the Son of God
To know Mercy, David tastes the price of Mercy; the price of Redemption.
4. It was Mercy that gave birth to Solomon
It was Mercy that gave birth to the Psalms in David;
the Word of God in David.
It was Mercy that gave birth to Mercy in David;
a new heart in David;
sanctification in David.

It was Mercy that made David into the image of Mercy.

You see God is Mercy and He is *hesed*. He is Covenant Love.

When we preach the Mercy of God upon all creation;
we are not laying down the Sword;
we are picking it up;
proclaiming Judgment
and going to war with Satan
on behalf of all creation.

Mercy is the sword...the very Word of God and Presence of Christ. He has already conquered, but called us to proclaim His victory; even manifest His victory.

So forgiving all is not laying down the Sword, but picking it up and thrusting it into the belly of the King of Shame.

What could hurt the Accuser more than the Proclamation and very presence of Grace?

You know Jesus is called "Son of David" and "Son of Man." Just as He was born of David's failure; He is born of your failure.

When you stop hiding your shame (but instead surrender your shame),
the Son of Man is born in your manger...
not your palace...your stinky manger.

"The one forgiven much loves much." Then through you He battles the King of Shame;
You are a warrior who's found his war...found her war.

If you don't get what I'm saying, this is your homework:

Go rent *Gran Torino*, directed by Clint Eastwood and starring Clint Eastwood.

In the movie he plays an old warrior, Walt Kowalski, a Korean war hero; imprisoned in shame. His wife has died and he lives alone, sitting on the couch. Every now and then a young priest comes to visit because the priest promised Walt's deceased wife that he'd try to get Walt to go to Confession. Walt is a warrior without a war. So he pretty much declares a war of grumpiness on everyone he meets...especially Hmong refugee families moving into his neighborhood. One night a teenage Hmong boy, named Thao, tries unsuccessfully to steal Walt's beloved *Gran Torino* as initiation to a gang he doesn't want to join. Thao's mother makes Thao do work for Walt as penance and eventually, grudgingly, they become friends. Walt's estranged from his sons and Thao has no father. So Walt teaches Thao how to be a man.

Well when Thao refuses to join the Hmong gang terrorizing the neighborhood. The gang shoots up Thao's house, then kidnaps and rapes Thao's sister. Thao turns to Walt to help him get revenge and justice. Walt thinks awhile and tells Thao to return that afternoon. Then Walt makes preparations. Even goes to church and confesses some sins. The priest catches on...and tries to stop Walt. He expects Dirty Harry, the Outlaw Jose Wales and the High Plains Drifter to show up all at once.

Well Thao returns. Walt takes him to the basement to show him his guns. He gives Tao his Medal of Valor; tricks him; locks him in the basement...in order to "finish things."



Scene from *Gran Torino*

Thao running up stairs of basement and realizing door is locked.

Thao:

Walt. Walt. What are you doing? What are you doing, huh?

Walt:

Relax, you can't get outta there.

Thao:

You let me out right now! Let me out!

Walt:

You wanna know what it's like to kill a man? Well it's God damn awful, that's what it is! The only thing worse is gettin a Medal of Valor for killing some poor kid that wanted to just give up, that's all. Yeah some scared little gook, just like you. I shot him right in the face with that rifle you were holding in there awhile ago. Not a day goes by that I don't think about it. And you don't want that on your soul. Now I've got blood on my hands and I'm soiled. That's why I'm goin it alone tonight.

Thao:

Walt you take me with you! Right now! Let me out!

Walt:

Look, you've come a long way. And I'm proud to say that you're my friend. But you've got your whole life ahead of you; but me, I finish things. That's what I do; and I'm goin it alone.

Thao:

No! Wait! Walt! Walt! Walt! Walt! Ahhhhh!

Clint walking up to a house at night. Noises and talking can be heard. A man opens the door of the house. Two men walk out and a third stands in the doorway.

Big man:

I didn't think your ass would've came.

Walt:

Shut up gook. I got nothin to say to you.

Taller man pulls out a gun and points at Walt.

Walt:

Yeah. Yeah, you go ahead and watch out for your boyfriend 'cuz it was either he or you or someone who raped one of their own family. Your own blood for Christ's sake. So now go ahead and pull those pistols, like miniature cowboys. Go ahead.

Scene from *Gran Torino (cont.)*:

Big man:

So where's Thao at?

Walt:

Don't worry about Thao. Thao's got not one second for you.

Neighbors come out of homes and stand in doorways or look out of windows. Several people in the gang's house stick guns out of windows.

Walt:

Kind of jumpy, aren't we? (While pretending to shoot them – his hand simulating a gun)

Gotta a light? (As he puts a cigarette in his mouth)

Now me, I've got light. (As Walt recites the Rosary) *"Hail Mary, full of grace."* He reaches into his jacket, as if to pull out a gun.

Shooting begins from the gang members and Walt falls to the ground. His hand opens and inside his hand is a cigarette lighter...not a gun, but a light.

He hadn't drawn a gun. He drew their fire, by drawing a light.

That's an old warrior who finally found his war. He had been imprisoned in shame. Thao was imprisoned in shame. The whole neighborhood, even the Gangbangers especially, were imprisoned in shame. But Walt went to war against Shame with Mercy; just holding a light, a lighter (not perfect mercy...but mercy).

And in so doing:

- He drew their fire and exposed the Evil for all to see (a neighborhood of witnesses who finally have the courage to testify to police).
- He set the neighborhood free and maybe even those gangbangers free from the dominion of Shame.
- He exposed Evil, breaking the bondage of Evil and disciplining those trapped in Evil.

In so doing:

1. He bore Evil to destruction in his own flesh.
2. He gave his life to Thao; his valor to Thao...even his Gran Torino to Thao (Actually, as the movie reveals, he left a will, a word, a testament: "The Gran Torino goes to Thao.")

So what Thao had stolen – he gave.

That's Grace.

He was an old warrior that finally found his war.

Well stretched out like that, on the ground; didn't he remind you of someone else?

...someone who finishes things...

including the dominion of the King of Shame.

Scene from the *Passion of the Christ*

Christ on the Cross:

My God...My God...why have you forsaken me?

It is accomplished...

A drop of water falls like a tear from God's eye, upon the Hill of the Skull.

And Satan, the King of Shame, screams in agony.

“My God. My God. Why have you forsaken me?” said Jesus.

Did you know that when Jesus said that, He was quoting David? Or perhaps David was quoting Jesus. It’s Psalm 22. It starts like that and ends like this:

²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you. ²⁸For kingship belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nations. ²⁹All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, even the one who could not keep himself alive. ³⁰Posterity shall serve him; it shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation; they shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn, that he has done it.

[It’s finished.]

Psalms 22:27-31 (ESV)

That’s the Word of God; born in David; spoken by David about 1000 B.C.

It appears that David found his war and his weapon. Three thousand years later, the Psalms are the most widely read literature in the world. For over 3,000 years they’ve gone to war – repeatedly breaking the dominion of Shame. The most repeated line in all the Psalms is this declaration of worship:

“The steadfast love of the Lord endures forever.”

You don’t have to get shot like Walt Kowalski. You don’t even have to be physically crucified like Jesus. But if you die to yourself and speak words of Mercy, in Jesus name...

If you say *“In Jesus name, you are forgiven.”*

Then you are a warrior who’s found his war or her war.

- You’re not battling your rebellious teenager;
you’re battling for your rebellious teenager
against the King of Shame.
- You’re not battling abortion doctors, pornography and gangbangers;
you’re battling for abortion doctors, pornographers, and gangbangers
against the King of Shame.
- You’re not battling religious types and Pharisees;
you’re battling for religious types and Pharisees
against the King of Shame.

You are a warrior and this is your weapon:

The Judgment of God

The Word of God

The steadfast Love that is God.

Communion

For when He was delivered up, He took bread and He broke it saying *“This is my body given to you. Take and eat and do this in remembrance of me. And in the same way, after supper, and having given thanks; the Son of David and the Son of Man took the cup and He said, this cup is*

the New Covenant, in my blood poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Drink of it, all of you, and do it in remembrance of me.”

And so He calls you. He calls you to come to His table. He conscripts you in His war. He says come to my table and pick up your sword. This is your sword.

And so, Lord Jesus, we pray that you would manifest yourself in us and we would fight your war because your war is already won; and you are exhibiting to us the power of your Grace and the wonder of Your Mercy. And so Father, it's in Jesus' name, that we thank you. We can even thank you for this war 'cause with the war you turn us into your warriors; the image of the Son of David and Son of Man, Jesus the Christ.

In Jesus' name, we thank you. Amen.

So, bring your manger, alright? And receive the Word of God. In Jesus' name, believe the Gospel. Amen.

Benediction

And so Lord Jesus, you make beautiful things out of dust. Father, you make beautiful things out of dust. It was out of David's sin and the death of Uriah; the pain of Bathsheba – out of all of that you made Jesus. And Jesus, out of our shame and our suffering and our sin, you make us into the people that we are to be.

The image of you – the King of Grace.

So, Father, in Jesus' name, we thank you. Amen.

And so I want you to hear me. Do you ever get mad? Right? You just walk around this earth and you get angry, right? Because there's injustices; there's evil; there's stuff that ticks you off. Sometimes people say, "Peter in your sermon you seem mad." And I say, "Yeah I am mad 'cuz I really hate evil. Its evil...it's just evil, evil, evil." You get mad at it. Maybe that's because you were made to be a warrior and I'm just reminding you about your war. You battle not against flesh and blood. You battle not Democrats. You battle not Republicans. You battle not Afghans. You battle not gangbangers and prostitutes or your relatives this week at Thanksgiving dinner. Remember that! You battle the King of Shame and you carry a sword. A sword that smites the nations; sets the captives free and brings them home.

In Jesus' name, believe the Gospel and speak the Gospel. Amen.

Disclaimer: This document is a draft and has not been edited by the author. Therefore, there may be discrepancies. Some discrepancies may be minor; some may have to do with theology. When in doubt, please refer to the audio version of the sermon on this website and don't be shy about informing us of errors.