

Connect timeless truths with today's news.

### **VIOLENCE FOR THE GROUP**

This September 11 saw the release of research examining why people commit violence in support of a group. Joanna Lindström, PhD Researcher in Psychology at Stockholm University, and her team found that some people—but not all—who saw their group as “unjustly disadvantaged” felt justified in the use of violence for their cause. Lindström’s team wanted to know why some in this group called for violence and some did not. They found that individuals who felt superior to others and entitled to privileges were most likely to think their group was unfairly disadvantaged. This held true even if their group was not actually “structurally disadvantaged.” It seems that feeling superior may be linked to a tendency to justify violence.

### **VIOLENCE FOR THE LAW**

Today’s passage describes two events in Jesus’ life when the Jewish religious leaders took up stones to commit violence to carry out their interpretation of God’s Law. In one, they sought to “purge” Israel of the sin of adultery, and in the other, they sought to punish Jesus over his claim to have existed prior to Abraham. In both cases, they felt righteous and justified in attempting to kill someone else. And in both cases, Jesus prevented their ungodly violence.

1. Under what conditions, if any, would you consider violence justifiable?
2. Why do some people feel unjustly disadvantaged even when most observers would not consider them disadvantaged at all?
3. What do you think of the claim that non-violence is a core teaching of Christianity?

### **Additional Resources**

*These videos and materials are for your personal use. If you show videos in class, be sure to have the necessary rights to do so.*

Music Video, Traditional: [“Praise Him! Praise Him! Jesus, Our Blessed Redeemer!” by Ernie Haas & Signature Sound](#)

Music Video, Multicultural: [“Corner” by Elikem Kofi x Rehmahz](#)

Music Video, Contemporary: [“Here Is Our Surrender” by Mitch and Steph Wong](#)

[Christian Study Library Commentary on John 8:1–12](#)

[Guzik’s Commentary on John 8](#)

[Center for Excellence in Preaching Commentary on John 8:48–59](#)