

A Sermon on Jason, Norman, and Michael (#SpoilerAlert)

Sermon by Rev. Minister Angela Smith of COPE for August 23rd, 2020 (and beyond)

[Note: If unfamiliar with the film franchises "Friday the 13th", "Psycho" (Hitchcock version), and "Halloween", you may wish to watch those films (at least the original first in the franchise and possibly "Freddy v. Jason" though Freddy is supportively featured only in this sermon) before reading further so you understand the references. People who are ignorant often don't understand references made by more educated people and that's not the fault of the educated which is why the educated often refer to such moments as "teachable moments" as a way of acknowledging the problem is more ignorance than evil. So, virtuous educated people see opportunities to teach or enlighten when faced with ignorant people. But, where someone falsely claims to know everything and then not to understand those around them, it is clear they are a pathological liar, delusional, or so confused they self-negate by regularly contradicting themselves. In such instances it is an inferiority complex masquerading as a superiority complex, in my humble lay opinion. The sad thing is the ignorant have to recognize their own ability to learn and that others know things they don't which can pose a problem for malignant narcissists who exist in a self-referential bubble from which there is no escape unless they accept they've been born, exist, are alive, and there is a whole world manifested and ready to be explored and studied provided by God which most Creationists appreciate.]

For the purposes of promoting and practicing Truth and Virtue, this sermon provides a lay psychological and/or spiritual examination of fictional characters Jason Voorhees ("Friday the 13th" films), Norman Bates ("Psycho" films), and Michael Myers ("Halloween" films). From my perspective, if psychosis were on a fictional character spectrum Norman Bates would fall somewhere between Jason Voorhees and Michael Myers. Voorhees is clearly a co-dependent with abandonment (abandonment issues stemming from loss of his father) issues, in my opinion. Bates' similar issues to Voorhees include abandonment by father (intentional or through death) and severe co-dependent relationship with his mother who by all accounts is a malignant narcissist. And, then we have Myers who lives with both parents and a sibling. So, no paternal abandonment issues and no apparent co-dependence. Voorhees didn't kill his mother. Bates and Myers both kill their mothers, but, for different reasons. Bates kills his mother for being too controlling but like Voorhees remains haunted by her nagging memory and Myers kills his mother because she's a whore from his perspective. Myers sees his mother as trying to seduce him which he can't act upon and doesn't want to but she keeps leaving the bedroom door open, inviting him in while she's undressed or dressing, having him help her while she sits at the Vanity, and it is all so vicious and tempting of his more basic nature that he snaps. He can't take being that close to temptation and it is like his mother has no sense of boundaries or appropriate limitations on intimacy between young men and their mothers. If she does know, she's taking some sick pleasure out of torturing her son because the fact he wants her or is tempted at all reinforces her vanity and she prioritizes that over the welfare of her own children which from Myers perspective makes her a whore. Some would say The Holy Bible supports Myers' position.

The similarities between Bates and Voorhees is that both were raised by single/widowed mothers and have no siblings. So, Bates and Voorhees are also only children. Both come from upper middle class families. Sleep Away and/or Wilderness Camps right now cost an average of \$558/day with a \$3,194 enrollment fee. Source: <https://www.allkindsoftherapy.com/blog/how-much-does-wilderness-therapy-cost>. Summer Camps can last up to 9 weeks on average. Source: <https://www.usasummerncamp.com/blog/how-long-does-camp-in-america-last/#:~:text=Most%20Summer%20Camps%20start%20between,the%20time%20of%20your%20life!> So, \$35K for a special needs summer or wilderness camp for 9 weeks. Summer Day Camps range from \$300-500/week (but the kids come home at night). Source: <https://www.greaterseattleonthecheap.com/summer-camps>. Still, looking at \$2700-\$4500 for such day camp options which is not in the budget for the vast majority. So, that's my evidence that Voorhees came from an upper middle class family that could afford the fees. The fees are so high because of the risks associated with such camps and the potential wrongful death or other suits they may need to cover out of any funds/profits. Jason was sent to a sleep-away camp (Camp Crystal Lake) and therefore from some perspectives on vacation.

Bates, on the other hand, worked for the family business (Bates Motel) and maintained family property. So, here's where Bates and Voorhees differ to some degree. Bates stood up to his mother in attempting to establish himself as man of the house where she was exploiting his labor and manipulating him without permitting him the arguable freedom to choose his own career and destiny. And, he had no vacation, but, did have a hobby. Voorhees was likely intended to have a vacation that provided a vacation of sorts to his mother as well, but, it ended poorly. Bates addressed the controlling malignant narcissist that was his mother in life, but, is haunted by her nagging after her death likely as a result of guilt for killing her and mixed emotions around that. Voorhees didn't kill his Mom and as she had attempted to avenge his wrongful death, he tries to avenge hers without realizing his Mom was responsible for his enrollment in an unqualified and risky camp and those who killed her were acting in self-defense. The thing is though, the internet didn't exist when "Friday the 13th" came out so there was really no way for Mrs. Voorhees to find out more about the camp unless she volunteered or shadowed it before enrolling her son and likely any staff would be on best "behavior" in front of a potential client. Bates was taught responsibility and confused by the hypocrisy where word didn't match deed by those around him. The woman he murders in the first "Psycho" is a thief on the run who signs in under a pseudonym on the motel registry. Voorhees is in a blind rage against everyone his Mom is/was angry with about his death or anyone who matches the description of whomever upset his Mom which is why he's a co-dependent and his Mom is the narcissist. [Please see "Freddy v. Jason" to see how Freddy helps Jason resolve the underlying power struggle between Jason and his nagging mother.] But, what about Michael, how does he fit in?

Michael kills his mother as did Norman respectively. But, only Norman and Jason are haunted by the memory of their mothers. And, both Norman and Jason appear to still obey their mothers even though Norman continues to protest while remaining subjugated by Norma's memory. The fact he was named after his mother also indicates that his

mother was a malignant narcissist. Jason does not protest his mother, he appears to willingly submit. Michael actually seems quite satisfied by having killed his parents and is not haunted by their memory to my knowledge. Michael's motives are more similar to Bates because Michael's mother also has Michael do chores that exceed what one should expect of their child and in inappropriate ways that cross boundaries causing harm. But, Myers continued murder spree is more aligned with Voorhees in terms of target population. Bates doesn't want to hurt anyone and as a result of undue influence by his mother feels he has to or else he'll be disobedient and be punished which he then visits on those he finds vicious and deceptive in agreement with his mother's position which he struggles to overcome. So, you can see the virtue in Bates and his struggle with independence while suffering undue influence as a result of an abusive mother who is a malignant narcissist.

Jason may very well be considered a "good son" or "good boy" if you only consider his mother's perspective and quite likely Mrs. Voorhees and Norma Bates are having tea in some corner of fictional hell discussing their sons. Mrs. Voorhees brags about how good and obedient Jason is and Norma says "Norman obeys. But, he is not as compliant as your son. In fact, when I haunt Norman I tell him he should be more like Jason and NEVER KILL HIS MOTHER, only for her. He hasn't exorcised the house or invited Ghostbusters, so, progress." Mrs. Myers might overhear and say, "My son Michael was so jealous of anyone else wanting or having me that he killed me and my husband. I think that's sweet." Likely both Mrs. Voorhees and Norma Bates would find Mrs. Myers the most disturbing or disturbed and not invite her to join for tea in hell.

Obedience is not a virtue. Oxford Languages via Google defines "Obedience" as "compliance with an order, request, or law or submission to another's authority," and "observance of a monastic rule". Same source defines "Monastic" as originating from the Greek "Monastikos" derived from "monazein" which means to "live alone". Therefore obedience itself means to be subjugated or submit to another's authority or one's own authority. If honest and virtuous, likely in the US anyway, going to be left alone and trusted with freedom and responsibility assuming self-discipline is being practiced by all in good faith and/or of good faith. If dishonest and vicious, likely going to be penalized or risk significant harm because you aren't leaving others alone and when interacting causing unjustifiable and unreasonable harm. So, those who via delusions of grandeur assume authority they do not have or would be stripped of for abusing their position of power (i.e. the mothers of Jason, Norman, and Michael), who in the very least deceive themselves regarding their own authority with disregard for the law and limitations on their authority, and exhibit any of the vices such as Vanity, Wrath (Hate), Oppression (subjugating others thereby denying equality in eyes of God and the law), Sloth (i.e. failing to exercise due diligence to find out if a camp is qualified and will responsibly care for clients), Jealousy (some people blame seduction for this, others blame the one lacking self-discipline or both if more than one party appears to be lacking in honesty or other areas of self-discipline), and Greed find themselves on the wrong side of US law as well as God's law in most, if not all cases. No one is above the law, but, requiring proof beyond a reasonable doubt keeps more criminals free than condemns in hopes to avoid wrongful convictions. President Ulysses S. Grant was arrested for a traffic offense in DC

while president of the US. Source: <https://www.businessinsider.com/can-a-president-be-indicted-ulysses-s-grant-was-once-arrested-for-speeding-2018-12> So, in the US everyone is accountable at law, but, the standards of evidence (AKA burden of proof), available defenses, and rights to a trial are afforded to all. If you don't believe laws should apply to you or that you shouldn't be held to any common standards at law or in society, then you should apply that same logic to society itself and respect society's choice to do as we will to you should you do something gravely dissatisfactory or disappointing. If you don't agree that society has the right to penalize you on any level after you've dishonestly and/or viciously done harm to others, then you are a hypocrite and have no moral authority nor legal authority on which to make your case. But, if you respect that where there is harm, foul called by a referee (judge/jury/police), and penalty for everyone where that's the circumstance then you understand and likely didn't need this paragraph/part.

What does "respect" mean? Giving the Oxford Languages via Google definition for "respect" as a verb here which means "admire (someone or something) deeply, as a result of their abilities, qualities, or achievements", "have due regard for the feelings, wishes, rights, or traditions of," "avoid harming or interfering with," and/or "agree to recognize and abide by (a legal requirement)." So, nowhere do we see "obey" as a definition for "respect", though often some malignant narcissists conflate the two. The first definition is respect that is earned by virtue of the recipient from the perspective of the one showing respect. The second is showing mutual respect for others with understanding of contextual variables. The third says to avoid harm. The fourth is agreeing and abiding by the law. In the US, you can challenge the laws legislatively and through the courts if unconstitutional. You can even run for office yourself or get a job working for the government. So, the law is respecting you enough to welcome your participation in its evolution to the extent all are welcome to do so in the USA. But, some people are focused on instant gratification and convenience with no regard to how that adversely impacts or harms others and that's why we maintain prisons or even still have the death penalty which PETA argues is more humane than labor camps. I still don't understand entirely why those are the only two options, but, when someone is a threat to all of us who respect each other enough not to ever rape a child (for example), I think the threat reasonably should be contained or eliminated for the greater good. But, I also understand good people at times use bad judgment so recognize and appreciate the courts recognize that too so are more lenient on first time and/or non-violent offenders in most cases. I recognize child rapists as having dehumanized their victims (direct and indirect) and thereby dehumanized themselves in the process. I also try very hard to empathize with those others find disturbing or disturbed, but, can't find any justification ever for raping children. Killing mothers? You be the judge.

Here are philosophical questions for you to contemplate if you wish:

1. Would you rather hang out with Jason, Norman, or Michael?
2. Would you be comfortable being neighbors with Jason, Norman, or Michael?

3. Are you most bothered by Jason's death, Norman's hobby, or Michael's institutionalization?

[Note: My answer to #3 is Jason's death.]

No consequences means no consequences. So, to the extent one assumes right to be dishonest and vicious, if recognizing the equality of all under such system of rights as universal to and for all, one has no basis on which to claim a violation of any right unless falsely assuming autocratic authority over all of creation. Oxford Languages via Google defines "autocratic" as "relating to a ruler who has absolute power" and "taking no account of other people's wishes or opinions; domineering." So, basically if your point of view is you should have sole authority and all should obey you without question or protest and under threat of penalty decided solely by you, you are like Hitler or a Nazi. So, from my perspective an enemy of the state and not just a menace to society. The state represents the people and in a democracy where differing opinions, perspectives, and views are welcome and discussed, this means compromise to keep the peace though it often results in grumbling assent (assent=agreement). But, if you want to throw out law enforcement and the justice system due to imperfections or fallibility or because you'd rather decide for everyone else and assume authority of all systems of government, I see you as a serious threat that requires containment in the very least because my grandfathers didn't fight in WWII and the Korean Police Action while serving the US military for nothing, understand? My Uncle Samuel Thomas Smith, Jr died serving the USMC in Vietnam. Basically, if everyone can do whatever we want without any penalty, "The Most Dangerous Game" might become a fun pastime for more than you realize. So, step away from the call to defund law enforcement and recognize the benefit of the Justice System we have in place where the burden of proof results in more getting away with crime than not. 50% of homicides go unsolved. Source: <https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2017/crime-in-the-u.s.-2017/topic-pages/expanded-homicide> So, arguably 1/2 the murderers are getting away with it. Get serious about recognizing how the burden of proof serves criminals where in places where the burden of proof is less objective more would be penalized. Or, get ready for war with people way more "Old Testament" than I am on my best or worst day depending on perspective, seriously. Can't handle that reality? Then you are delusional and may find yourself in an inescapable hellscape unless you still have the choice for assisted suicide in any institutional setting, not just prison.

Socrates chose the death penalty as did Westley A. Dodd when convicted of corrupting and/or raping/murdering children. That's my argument for making it an option. It would also give victims peace of mind who otherwise might continue to live in reasonable fear of the release or escape of say Michael Myers. I accept there are those who would disagree. But, I don't really care what three women in hell discuss at tea, do you? Their sons deserve better.

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"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32 KJV Willful blindness is an abomination.

COPE accepts Feedback, critical and complimentary. Learn more at <https://www.cope.church/feedback.htm> . For the sake of keeping myself and others humble, a sense of humor is welcome on all sides.

For More About COPE and the HEAL Mission, see:

<https://www.cope.church> and <http://www.heal-online.org>