

## **A Perspective on Sandy Hook Elementary**

December 17, 2012

On Friday, another senseless school shooting occurred at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut. In total, 26 people were murdered, 20 of whom were children between the ages of 6 and 7 years of age. As the news of this horrific event was unfolding, I sat glued to my computer, wanting to know what happened. However, I soon found myself increasingly angered and sickened by what this young man perpetuated on these innocent people.

Today is Monday, and I've heard enough. I don't want to know what kind of ammunition the murderer used. I don't want to know what kind of guns he used. I don't want to know how many times each child was shot, or the damage that was inflicted by the rounds he chose to use. I don't want to hear any more arguments pro or con concerning gun control. I've heard enough. Today, I am angry and saddened for the families of those who suffered loss. But it's those feelings of anger that I want to address, because I'm supposing that I'm not the only Christian who is experiencing those same feelings. Does the anger I feel make me less of a Christian? After all, Christianity is a religion of love and forgiveness. Do I just need to be more mature as a Christian?

Consider. The Bible contains several "imprecatory" statements (e.g. Psalm 69:22-28; Psalm 5:10; Psalm 59; Psalm 79; Psalm 109). The word, "Imprecatory" means "to invoke evil." However, as you read these Psalms, keep in mind that they were written by David, a man after God's own heart. How could David say such things? Well, if we realize that these statements were not written due to the desire for personal revenge, but because of the unrighteousness of David's enemies, and their sins against God, they are easier to process. David was zealous for God and his will.

Likewise, consider the persecution of early Christians by the Roman empire and read the words of those who had been martyred (Revelation 6:9-10). They cried out, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until you judge and avenge our blood...?" Were they unforgiving and bitter because of their personal loss, or were they calling for action that would bring an end to a persecution that was attempting to thwart the righteous cause of God?

Today, I'm angry. But what I am most angry about is how the events that took place at Sandy Hook Elementary school, were such an offense to God and his creation. What took place was not just an assault against children, families, and our nation, it was an attack against all that is holy and right. And for that reason, we have every right to be angry and desire justice. In fact, when viewed from this perspective, it emboldens me to give no place to the Devil in my life. At times, the Devil courts us, tempts us, teases us, and promises us pleasure and happiness, but when the disguise is removed, and we see him for what he really is, I choose to have no part in his deceptive dealings (Can you recall the scene from "It's A Wonderful Life" when George Bailey shook hands with Mr. Potter after being promised great wealth and power. It was at that moment, he could see through the disguise and realize just who he was dealing with).

If you find yourself angry over the shootings, good, you should be angry. Such emotions are holy. But make sure you direct that anger toward the one who brought sin and death into this world, and allow it to cause you to cling more tightly to our only hope – Jesus, who alone can deliver us from such wickedness.

(Of course the "evil" that I speak of in this article is based on the presupposition that this young man was not so mentally impaired that he could not discern that his actions were wrong).