

Dear Crossview Family,

Following the United States precise and devastating air strike against the Iranian military nuclear enrichment site this past Saturday, some people (or many people... I have no sense of the scope or level of concern) are concerned about the activation of terrorist cells against soft targets in America. This past Sunday, in a suburb of Detroit, Michigan, a potential mass shooter was killed by the safety team at a CrossPointe Community Church, before he could harm the congregation. The initial thoughts about the church shooter is that mental instability was a major factor, but I have no specific comment until evidence from the investigation is revealed.

I begin with those two events as the framework to discuss cyclical trends we are observing in our world, our nation, our local communities, and even in some of our families. When we turn off our minds, and follow our emotions, it can lead to all types of deranged thinking, that can sometimes lead to deranged actions. Those actions can come from genuinely evil people with a demonically driven intent to kill, maim, steal, and destroy. These people are ideologically influenced. At other times those deranged actions are executed by people who with deranged minds... mentally ill people who need medical treatment. At times the mental illness is biological or organic in nature. Other times, the mental illness might be the result of mind poisoning over time. Bitterness, irrationality, rejecting critical thinking, embracing comfortable lies, pride, and willful ignorance are all possible steps that lead to a psychotic breakdown and violent behaviors. Ironically, there is an increasingly large swath of society who would not individually engage in physical violence against another person, but would participate with a large group to either attempt to silence or hinder those holding different views or engaging in legal behaviors. These individuals often act sincerely, but are misinformed, or desire to be perceived as good people, while operating with significant ignorance about the issues at hand. Those issues can range from complex global geo-political issues, to federal and state governance issues, to medical, biological, and scientific issues, to moral values and spiritual issues.

I have two thoughts in response to the cyclical trends of violence. First, we need to be wise and prepared. We live in a world where bad people do bad things, so we should all be alert (not fearful, but alert) so that we can be protectors of the innocent and vulnerable in our sphere of influence. Secondly, we need to be a voice of reason and sanity. This can occur in two sub-contexts: 1) when speaking to those who are being held captive by philosophies and empty deceit (Colossians 2:8) and/or those “elemental spirits of the world” (Colossians 2:20) that seek to control the minds and bodies (actions) both believers and non-believers, and 2) when speaking to like-minded individuals, so that we do not get off track. We may agree on identification of worldly problems, however, we must protect one another from applying worldly, rather than biblical, solutions. If we agree or disagree with a political, judicial, or economic method to addressing an issue, that should never distract us from seeking to apply the REAL solution to the REAL needs of people and nations. While it may sound cliché and be a Sunday School answer, it remains true. JESUS is the answer. So, brothers and sisters in Christ, we can have both peace and confidence, because our God reigns and He has given us His Spirit of Wisdom.

While activities tend to slow down a little over the summer with some many people traveling, I am very excited about some big thing we are planning for the end of the summer. For both the concerns we have for our world and nation and the ministries of our local church and personal needs, PRAYER is critical!

Blessings!

Jeff