



Preacher's Pen by Eric Dwyer

The subject of suicide is not an easy one to discuss. It is very devastating and difficult to rehash. But if our confusion, pain and feelings of loss are just swept under the rug we will not allow ourselves to heal as a congregation, as a family or as an individual. I never anticipated the need to write this article. But given recent events in our area, I would be remiss if I said nothing.

In November I was about to teach a Sunday school lesson on Jesus as our "Wonderful Counselor" (Isaiah 9:6). Our custom is to begin our class by asking how the previous week went for everyone. One of our young ladies informed us that a boy she knew from school killed himself that previous Friday. He printed three notes before his action. One note was for his parents and one of them was addressed to her. She was the first person he met at the school because she was selected to show him around when he arrived as a new student. He was also to be her escort to the school dance that weekend.

That next Wednesday, another tragedy took place which hit our youth group hard. A family with many siblings was experiencing trouble. The parents do not attend our church but all of the kids have. Almost an hour after the kids were dropped off at home after attending our Wednesday evening activities, the father was arguing with one of his daughters. He then went inside the house, and killed himself. His wife and step son witnessed the event.

Finally, right before Thanksgiving, a college peer of mine also committed suicide. He was a mentor and my friend.

Why do people choose to end their lives

and send shock waves through their loved ones? It doesn't seem to be isolated to one age group, as we have a teen and adults listed in this article. My friend from Bible college was well educated about the Bible and seemed to have a very strong faith in Jesus.

Is it because of the time of year? Studies have been conducted regarding the time of the year most suicides take place. The Centers for Disease Control has published an article on their website stating the suicide "rate peaks in the...fall."¹

Is it because of the culture? The song "If I Die Young" by The Band Perry contains the following lyrics. "A penny for



my thoughts, oh no, I'll sell them for a dollar. They're worth so much more after I'm a goner. And maybe then you'll hear the words I been singing. Funny, when you're dead how people start listening. The sharp knife of a short life. Well, I've had just enough time."²

I hope it is not because we have lost sight of the promises of God. It is my prayer that you know you are loved and are not alone. The Bible says, "Cast all your anxiety on [Jesus] because he cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7). May we remind and encourage one another to be *living* sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God (Romans 12:1). Jesus came that we may have *life* to the fullest (John 10:10). Never forget there are lost souls looking for truth. Peter (1:2:12) tells us to *live* Godly lives among non-believers so they may see our good deeds and glorify God. With the help of the Holy Spirit, let us *live* the answers together.

¹<http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/suicide/holiday.html>

²<http://www.elyrics.net/read/b/band-perry-lyrics/if-i-die-young-lyrics.html>