

## From Our Pastor

March 17, 2018

Sabbath greetings to everyone!

The worst "social problem" in America today could well be fatherless homes. The news has been saturated all week long with reaction to the recent shootings in a public school. The media coverage has been almost non-stop with student marches, discussions, demonstrations, and expressions of anger. The gun used in the crime has been put on public trial and found "guilty!!"

Over two years ago, columnist Jeanine Martin wrote in TBE.com, "What Do ALL the Mass Shooters Have in Common? No Father in the Home." It was true then, and proven true again. The killer in the recent Florida tragedy was Nikolas Cruz. He and his biological brother were adopted by an older couple when Nikolas was an infant. His father Roger died in 2004, when Nikolas was only 4 or 5. Nikolas's mother died just a few months ago. Like so many of the mass shooters, young Nikolas grew up without a father in the home.

CNN issued a special report on violence, listing the major killings of recent decades. The Dailywire reported this week, "Writing at The Federalist in 2015, Peter Hesson highlighted the fact that of all the shootings on CNN's "27 Deadliest Mass Shootings In U.S. History" list committed by young males since 2005, only one was raised by his biological father."

With 42 per cent of US children being raised currently in single-parent households, we should be very concerned. A joint federal study recently showed that 63 percent of youth suicides are from fatherless homes. Harvard sociologists have observed that urban violence is concentrated in neighborhoods of mostly single-parent homes. A Michigan State University study found 75 percent of examined adolescent murderers were from fatherless homes. The Centers for Disease Control says 85 percent of children with behavioral disorders have only a mother in the home.

Despite all of the books, speeches, and declarations of recent years to the contrary, the truth remains that children need a mother and a father to raise them. Each has something vital to give as the child grows up. Author Warren Farrell at USA TODAY says, "Without dads as role models, boys' testosterone is not well channeled, "The boy experiences a sense of purposelessness, a lack of boundary enforcement, rudderlessness, and often withdraws into video games and video porn. At worst, when boys' testosterone is not well-channeled by an involved dad, boys become among the world's most destructive forces. When boys' testosterone is well channeled by an involved dad, boys become among the world's most constructive forces."

Nearly three thousand years ago a wise king named Solomon wrote that fathers should educate and teach their sons. " My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings."(Proverbs 4:20). In fact, the entire 4th chapter of Proverbs is about the

importance of a father teaching his son, "Hear, my children, the instruction of a father, And give attention to know understanding; For I give you good doctrine: Do not forsake my law.

When I was my father's son, Tender and the only one in the sight of my mother, He also taught me, and said to me: "Let your heart retain my words; Keep my commands, and live. " (Proverbs 4: 1-4).

How much violence and suffering would have been avoided and lives saved if the twenty-seven young men on the CNN list of killers had been taught principles of truth, character, responsibility, and right behavior by their fathers? What future victims will die at the hands of young men like Cruz or Dylann Roof (Roof, who never knew his father, killed nine African-Americans in a Charleston, S.C., church in 2015)?

Western society is paying a heavy price as a result of the decline of the nuclear family. In real terms the breakdown of the family unit has hurt virtually everyone. The decline will continue until Jesus the Christ returns to this earth and all the world begins to understand and obey the commandments of God, which were given to us for our good. May that day come soon.

Even before that time, the scriptures teach that one like Elijah will come and begin the healing process in the family. The prophet Malachi, the last writer of the Bible prior to the first coming of Jesus, wrote, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse." (Malachi 4: 5-6)

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