



Role Models

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. – John 13:34

I wise man once said, “Hold the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other. One will usually explain the other.” I can’t think of a time in my life that this saying (prophecy) is coming true. We have more news and information outlets than we have ever been exposed to. And I sit at my desk and see how the Word of God (or lack thereof) reveals the times.

I am also noticing how many of these people, who are the perpetrators, are seemingly getting younger and younger. That alarms me as it should all of us. Where are the “young adults” learning that violence is a plausible choice? What is taking place that causes one of these to lean into violence and death? Please don’t tell me it’s just the natural fall of evil that has been around for all of time. There may be an aspect of this that can be found in those parameters, but it seems to be growing. Maybe our information network and televising capabilities are bigger so that these things aren’t being done in reasonable (or unreasonable) secrecy. Maybe. But it doesn’t change the problem.

There are several things we can do to address this. Pray. And pray more than you ever have. Ask God to step into this hurt and anger with divine authority. The first century church saw things like this daily, directly upon them with purpose. Many of our brothers and sisters around the world have been martyred for their beliefs in such acts of hatred and evil. The 21st century had more Christian martyrs than any century before it combined.

But the question still echoes, “What can I do?”. I know about evil. I know that Satan roams this world. I know all about a fallen world and what it creates that continues the brokenness. But it all seems so abstract, like a philosophy of life, so to speak. What can I do today to keep this from continuing?

What you can do almost seems too simple to take serious. **Model how to love your neighbors.** They (whomever they are) may not look like you. Believe like you. They may be the hardest people to love and rebuff any attempt. But showing love is not the only reason to continue. It is only one aspect; even the most important reason because Jesus commanded us to love them, “as I have loved you.” But it isn’t the only one.

Do it because our youth and young adults are watching. We’ve been fooled into thinking that younger people don’t care what we do. We’ve been convinced that there is no respect coming from them. But we have to be the teachers! We have to be the role models! My fear is that they are watching us in person as well as our posts on social media, and they don’t have the maturity to know how to handle all these emotions and anger especially. Look at how we express ourselves to each other. Think back on conversations you’ve had over the last month. This is even my second attempt at this page because of how angry I was yesterday (May 24, 2022).

Model Love. Teach love. Give love. Teach something different than the fallen world.

From My Heart,

Billy