

A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE TO THE CHRISTCHURCH MASSACRE

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A police

officer stands guard in front of the Al Noor mosque in Christchurch. Picture: Vincent Yu/AP Source:AP

There is only one way to describe the cold-blooded massacre of 50 Muslims in New Zealand (with dozens more critical in hospital). It is evil, satanically and fiendishly evil. No condemnation of this heinous, cowardly act can be too strong.

These were Muslim worshipers who were mowed down while performing their Friday prayers in their mosques on that fateful Friday 15th March, 2019.

Among the dead and injured for life were children.

Among the dead were two grandparents out from Afghanistan visiting their family who had themselves recently emigrated to New Zealand seeking a brighter prospect for their family.

Among the dead was a brave father and husband who tried to tackle the shooter to save others, but who was killed when he may well have escaped, if he had thought of self-preservation.

Among the dead were women running from the scene but who were shot in their backs.

None of the dead were military combatants. They were not terrorists. They were Muslims, many of whom had fled their countries of origin to escape *Muslim* oppression!

From what we understand, the shooter was a right-wing extremist, a so-called white supremacist.



Brenton

Tarrant is accused of a terror attack in Christchurch on Friday. Picture: Mark Mitchell/AAP Source: AAP

Sadly, Brenton Tarrant grew up in a beautiful part of rural Australia, had a normal school life enjoying our Australian sports and values, and was part of a decent law-abiding family who loved him greatly. And yet he reasoned his victims must be eliminated presumably because they represented a threat to our way of life.

Subsequent to the shootings some members of the shooter's family have been interviewed on Aussie T.V. They are as horrified and shocked as the rest of us. Indeed, one of his cousins stated she felt the death penalty should be applied to him! His grandparents are too traumatised to appear in public, though I believe his grandma has since talked. His mother is a respected school teacher, and both she and her daughter were put under Police protection.

So this is where we must not overreact. This was not the crime of all white people.

This was not the crime of political conservatives who are rightly concerned about such questions as to how Muslim immigrants are being or should be assimilated into our 'Christian' or Western values and ideals --- and for any Americans reading this piece, this was not the crime of Donald Trump just because he wants an ordered protection at the U.S. - Mexico border!

This was the crime of a sick, demented, deceived individual. A man who apparently feels solidarity with others of like mind. But he is not part of a worldwide, organized, anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant conspiracy.

Indeed, one of the most heartening and gratifying things to observe, both in New Zealand and here in Australia, is how the incident has drawn people together in mourning and expressions of genuine sympathy and support. One of the hand-made signs prominent amongst all the flowers outside the mosque in Christchurch simply read: [This is not us!](#)



Prime Minister Jacinda

Ardern, center, leaves after a visit to the Kilbirnie Mosque in Wellington, New Zealand, on March 17, 2019. (Photo: Hagen Hopkins, Getty Images)

[New Zealand's Prime Minister has vowed never to mention the shooter by name!](#)

It was heart-warming to see New Zealand's Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern embracing survivors and their families with tears flowing copiously. Jacinda Ardern represented us all in those touching moments.

Nor should cautious politicians who think that Muslims need to become more incorporated into the larger society, be treated as though they are hateful nor irrational people. My point is that our response must be reasonable --- and for those of us who claim to follow the Lord Jesus, righteous.

We unequivocally condemn this evil act. And we unequivocally condemn the ideology behind it. There is no possible justification or rationale or excuse that can support this despicable massacre.

[MY DOGGED QUESTION](#)

That sincerely said, I have to be honest and admit there is a persistent question going around my head as I think of these things. Will we see the same kind of support from Muslim communities and leaders as Christians and other minorities are being imprisoned and tortured and murdered for their expressions of worship in Islamic controlled countries? Have we seen the same immediate call from Imams around the world to condemn Islamic terror when Jewish synagogues have been targeted and its worshippers slaughtered?

Why no outcry over these crimes against humanity? Perhaps New Zealand's example will prepare the way for a more sympathetic understanding from our Muslim friends? Are we not all of one blood and common humanity?

From February 13 to March 15 of this year --- the day of the Christchurch atrocity --- there have been roughly 150 terrorist attacks carried out by Muslims worldwide, many of them *against fellow Muslims*. An example would be the attack by Sunni Muslims on a political gathering of Shiite Muslims in Kabul, Afghanistan, killing 11 and wounding 90.

Without a doubt, it is bigger news for a mass slaughter to take place in two mosques in otherwise peaceful New Zealand. And perhaps the fact that the killer live-streamed the shooting gave it instant exposure and greater shock value.

Yes, this is a brutal, tragic, horrific act, not a political football. As another has said, "[Let us not use the blood of the slain to grease our personal agenda.](#)" He went on to say,

["And let's also remember that, worldwide, Christians, not Muslims, are the most persecuted religious group.](#)

[Just within the last few weeks in Nigeria, 32 Christians were killed in Maro and 46 Christians were killed in Anguwan Gamu, both times by Muslim terrorists. And in Shuwa, Nigeria, a girl \[was\] injured when two suicide bombers detonate\[d\] prematurely during an attempt to kill church-goers."](#)

[And using very conservative figures, which do not include casualties in the midst of war, Open Doors estimates that 11 Christians are killed every day for their faith.](#)

[As for worldwide terror attacks, a 2016 study indicated that "450 of 452 suicide attacks in 2015 were by Muslim extremists."](#) ¹

My question again is very simple and continues to exercise my heart and simply refuses to leave my mind. Will New Zealand's and Australia's genuine grief and support for our Muslim communities strike a similar chord when our own are the victims? This is not tit-for tat. It is a cry for genuine peace and brotherly love all round.

Look. I am a realist. There will always be murderous, hate-filled "white supremacists", and there will always be Islamic Jihadi terrorists, equally ready to inflict unimaginable suffering and trauma on innocent people of all faiths. And the circle of violence continues.

But for those who claim to follow our Lord Jesus Christ, let us remember that the world will know us by our love, by our non-retaliation and our non-violence, and above all by our forgiveness and tearful hugs in the midst of this dark world of suffering. Our forgiveness is contingent upon our forgiving others their trespasses against us, according to the word of our Lord himself ([Matt. 7:14; 18:35](#)).

["SYMPATHY HIJABS"](#)

Oh, and before I close off, there is one more question buzzing round my brain. What are we to make of Jacinda Ardern's wearing of the hijab as she mourned with the Muslim community? Was this a mark of respect and empathy to be commended? Judging by the overwhelming support from all over the world her action was a powerful way to identify with the grieving. The media consensus is that Ardern's wearing the hijab was highly commendable as she identified with the mourners.

¹ Dr Michael Brown's post, [A Reasoned Response to the Massacre of Muslims in New Zealand](#) appears on his site [Ask Dr Brown](#) on 22nd March, 2019.

And furthermore, Ardern even quoted the Bible in her expressions of sympathy. You know the verses that teach “the body is not one member, but many”? And how “there should be no division in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another”? And how “if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it” (I Cor. 12: 14, 25,-26)?

Well, forgive me but I wish to raise a concerned and dissenting voice. And it pains me to do this for I don't want to detract from my expression of outrage and grief at this horrible massacre. But bear in mind too, that it wasn't just Ardern who wore a “solidarity hijab”. Female members of New Zealand's police force and many in the wider community also took to wearing hijabs of identification.

But here's my point. The hijab for multitudes of muslim women around the world is a sign of oppression. Through Sharia Law the hijab has been and is being used to subjugate women around the world to being second class citizens whose basic civil rights are being denied.

It is not too harsh to point out that for these women who are forced to wear the hijab --- or even worse, the burqa --- the Islamic head-covering is a sign of misogyny and the oppression of women as nothing more than sex-slaves and sex-objects.

Indeed, I have read many of the tweets written by Muslim women who express their disappointment at Ardern's symbolic identification with (as they unanimously call it) the “wound collectors”.

I and all Iranian girls from the age of 7, were forced to wear a Hijab to go to school, This compulsion was imposed on us by the Islamic dictatorship. these are my personal experience of 18 years of wearing the veil was compulsive (grief, humiliation and hatred).

[#FreefromHijab](#)

Or this one:-

This is exactly how wound collectors exploit a tragedy to press their agenda, in this case to put a hijab on every woman in New Zealand. This is a terrible idea. [#freefromhijab @freefromhijab](#)
<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/christchurch-shooting/111411345/kiwis-encouraged-to-wear-headscarves-to-support-muslim-community...>

I could post dozens, if not hundreds more with the same sentiments. So, sorry to introduce such a negative on what was otherwise the most amazing display of the core values of freedom, human dignity and liberty, peace, tolerance and freedom of religion. All values, by the way, from our Judeo-Christian values owed to the Bible.

And please, don't get me started on the Islamic [Call to Prayer](#) that was televised over New Zealand's national broadcasters! Have we no insight into how this feeds into the Islamic mantra for world domination?

My ambivalent feelings aside, and lastly, let us remember that our world will only enjoy universal righteousness and peace when our Father God is pleased to again send His Son back to usher in the Kingdom-reign of God on earth.

We are those who are, [Looking for the new heavens and the new earth in which righteousness dwells \(2 Pet. 3: 13\)](#).

We are those who are praying, [Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven \(Matt. 7: 10\)](#).

