

# Roots in Ripon

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*The Ripon Bulletin*

## Where the Blame Is

In light of the tragedy that occurred in Parkland, Florida where 17 high school students were gunned down by a former classmate, I thought I might step into this hot-potato issue. I've written before about guns, the National Rifle Association (NRA), and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment which insures every American the right to self-protection.

In this article I wish to approach this emotionally laden subject from a bit of a different slant. Perhaps you have read about these incidents.

\*A man attacked 22 primary school children and an adult, as these children were arriving at school. All 22 children and the adult were injured.

\*In another attack, an unemployed middle-aged doctor killed eight children in order to vent his frustration and anger over a thwarted romantic relationship.

\*Yet another man broke into a middle school, injuring two students before fleeing the scene.

\*Still another man attacked 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students, injuring eight. His actions were caught on security cameras, charging after children in order to hurt or kill them.

These are just a few of the stories I found, and they are chilling. You may be thinking, "Where did these horrible attacks occur?" The answer is: China, from 2010-2014. And there are more, many more such stories. But you get the point. And did I mention that not once was a gun used? In every instance, a knife, a machete, or a meat cleaver was used to injure and kill students.

Oh, but the politicians in Washington DC, assure us that such horrific attacks occur only in the United States. And, after all, guns are the real problem, they say. And isn't the common denominator, whether in China or the U.S., that all the attackers are males!

Is getting rid of guns going to stop these horrible crimes? No. Is confiscating all sharp objects going to make the children in China safer? No. Since all the attackers were males, then just kill off all males! That's what King Herod of Israel did in ordering the murder of all the baby boys two-years old and under in his attempt to kill the baby Jesus.

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A reality that far too many folks ignore or refuse to deal with today is that there is evil in this old world. Granted, some of these situations are caused by a person who is clearly not right in their head. They need professional help. But in way too many other situations, it is simply a matter of a person choosing to commit an act of pure, unadulterated evil.

But why would anyone who is normal in every other way, choose to perpetrate such a heinous crime on children, or on anyone? Because they can, that's why.

America, and to a larger extent, the world, has opened the proverbial Pandora's Box. How have we done this, you ask? Let me give you three ways, though there are certainly more.

First, as a nation, America agreed that God was no longer essential or wanted in our nation. Many of you will remember when the Supreme Court of the United States authorized the removal of prayer from our public schools in 1962. Bad idea.

Second, the value and sanctity of human life was dealt a devastating blow when, again, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled in favor of abortion on demand through the 1973 Roe vs Wade decision. Another bad idea.

Third, the pampering and molly-coddling of our youth. Many are afraid of their own shadow, needing safe spaces, and teddy bears to comfort them from the evil that people do. They are ripe for attack from bullies who see them as easy prey.

So, here's my proposal: Let's invite the Lord God back into our lives, our schools, our society. Let's recapture the respect for one another that the Bible clearly teaches. Let's revisit this antiquated idea that we should fear God. Why? Because every single person will one day be presented before God to give an account of their life. Our actions will ultimately speak louder than our excuses.

Why were there no such awful crimes against children when I was in elementary school during the 1950s? Because there was still a very strong fear of God and his judgment which prevented many people from choosing to do evil against others. They feared punishment from society and from God.

And it's past time to begin toughening up our young people. Life isn't often easy. And it isn't often fair. But we are not doing the next generation any favors by attempting to remove all the bad things that could happen. There are great lessons to be learned through adversity and conflict. I was often picked on because I was short as a kid. Every so often I would get into a fist-fight with the guy bullying me. One thing always happened whether I won the fight or not. The bully quit picking on me. And sometimes we even became friends.

I have more to say on this, but it will have to wait.